



WOLFGANG POHRT 2024-01-26

## CAPITALISM FOREVER (EXCERPT3)

ECONOFICTION CAPITAL, COMMUNISM, MARX, MARXISM

In general, you can only admire capitalism the longer you spend with it. Marx probably felt very much the same way; in the end, he no longer knew what could replace it. The chapter on communism at the end of the third volume of *Capital* is very short. And certainly not because Marx died too early to complete the work. Even if he had lived another 100 years, he would not have succeeded.

I have three explanations.

The first: As we know, it is not enough to read *Capital*. Much more interesting ideas can often be found scattered throughout the rough draft. Like every author, Marx was faced at some point with the problem of packing the wealth of ideas from the preliminary studies into a

publishable form. A lot of thoughts are always lost in the process, as anyone who writes knows: do I abandon thoughts that are actually important in favour of clarity and systematics, or do I abandon systematics in favour of important thoughts?

To avoid this loss, to escape this dilemma, Nietzsche wrote aphorisms, and later Adorno wrote the “Minima Moralia”. Adorno’s main work is the “Minima Moralia”, not the “Negative Dialectic”. Marx stands at the transition from a world of great philosophical systems to a world that can no longer be systematically grasped and represented. Marx is the last great systematiser and at the same time the first for whom the fragments are as important as the elaborated system. Capital is the admirable document of a great failure. The time for such works was over; after Marx, no one else produced any.

The second: when Marx began his work, fuelled by the revolutionary élan of the time, he believed he knew what communism was. In the years of stagnation that followed, this belief faded and eventually disappeared altogether. The window of opportunity for the proletarian world revolution had closed again. And Marx was too implacable against himself, too truth-loving and too honest to profitably distribute shallow banalities about communism to disciples starving for it against his convictions, as today’s edification books on “alternatives to capitalism” do.

The third: Marx dug too long and too deep. He really did find out everything about capital. And that’s why he knew it would be unconquerable. Anyone who dives into the labyrinth to fathom it out will never find the exit. As I said, there are things that are better left unknown. Marx knew too much, because knowledge can also paralyse. Seen in this light, revolutionaries should avoid “Capital” training courses. Sometimes the impossible can succeed, but only if you had no idea it was impossible. Capital is more than just wealth, it is a mystery, a religion. “Subdue the earth” – wasn’t that God’s word, the word of our Christian God? Capital is its executor, not the Vatican.

There is a saying that faith can move mountains. Of course it can’t, with one exception: faith in a good return really can. The Suez Canal and the Panama Canal were dug by virtue of this belief, and the English Channel was tunnelled by virtue of this belief. Investors lost their money on each of these projects. But the power of their faith made the canals and the tunnel a reality. And now the ships are floating in it or trains are travelling through it. Isn’t that marvellous?

Or take the property bubbles, whether in Spain or the USA. The banks gambled away, but the result of the gambling is that the houses are now built and standing there. And when prices have fallen far enough, someone will live in them again. They wouldn’t be able to if the houses didn’t exist. It’s great that there is now so much living space, it was good that so many construction workers had a livelihood. And if the bookkeeping got a little mixed up in the process – that can all be sorted out. Of course, the current property owners are getting acquainted with tents and caravans. But one man’s bad luck is another man’s good luck. Before the houses can rot, the banks will sell them off, and if necessary at prices far below the cost price. Those who are able to grab them will get a bargain. Everyone is happy when they can get bankrupt goods cheaply.

Is there anything more stupid than this “debt brake”? What an idiotic word. Isn’t it better if

there are nice houses and the bank or someone else is broke? Would it be better the other way round? Is a debt-free life in abject poverty better than a good life on credit?

Yes, there is something more stupid than the debt brake, namely the justification for it. They choose the little ones who don't understand anything and can't argue back, namely the children. They are the ones who will have to pay off the mountains of debt we have accumulated.

Madness. What could be better for the children than to grow up in a country that treats itself to good food, good medical care and good schools for the little ones, even if on credit?

And the debt burden in fifty years' time: By then, we'll all have burnt to death or drowned, depending on which faction of climate changers you want to believe. It's funny how, on the one hand, we're constantly being told that the end will come soon and, on the other, we're being encouraged to enter the afterlife as debt-free as possible.

We don't even know what will happen tomorrow. But we are told that in fifty years' time the world will still be the same as it is today. The euro is said to be on the brink of collapse. If the dollar collapses tomorrow, not only the USA, but the whole world will be debt-free in one fell swoop, because most debts are dollar-based.

Reemtsma once told me a good joke: A desperately poor old couple, hungry and freezing in the middle of winter. The man goes out and comes back laden with ham, sausage and the finest things. From where? From the king. For what? The man explains that he has made a contract with the king. He had to teach his poodle to speak within five years. But if he fails to do so, he will be beheaded. The woman bursts into tears. The man comforts her: "Five years – I might die before then. The dog might die. The king may die." That's the right attitude to questions about the future.

Typical reaction to propagated carelessness: "But if the whole world suddenly becomes debt-free, your savings will be gone too."

Annoying. It's going to really piss me off. So what? If I can put money in the bank, I'll have money left over that I don't need to live on. Will I live worse if it's no longer in the savings account?

Not as long as the regular payments, income or pension, continue. Why don't we do it this way: the savings are withdrawn and an unconditional basic income is introduced as compensation.

[<](#) [PREVIOUS](#) [NEXT](#) [→](#)

---

## META

CONTACT

FORCE-INC/MILLE PLATEAUX

IMPRESSUM

DATENSCHUTZERKLÄRUNG

## TAXONOMY

CATEGORIES

TAGS

AUTHORS

ALL INPUT

## SOCIAL

FACEBOOK

INSTAGRAM

TWITTER